



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞



YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On July 10th, I attended a meeting with members of the Council of the Federation, which included the leaders of provincial and territorial governments. As your President, I take my responsibility to represent your voices and your interests at forums seriously. Last week's meeting was a valuable opportunity to speak directly to every provincial and territorial leader and to continue building relationships with each of them, constantly advocating for all Red River Métis Citizens, no matter where they live.

I provided the Premiers with an update of the *Red River Métis Self-Government and Implementation Treaty* with Canada. I explained that negotiations with Canada are complete, and that Citizens voted unanimously to ratify our Treaty at the Extraordinary General Assembly in June. It is important that provincial and territorial government leaders understand that our Treaty will correct the historical wrongs committed by the federal government following the neglect of the promises made to us in the *Manitoba Act, 1870*.

Each member of the Council was interested and receptive to further dialogue. They all listened and asked a range of thoughtful questions, indicating their willingness to work in partnership with us.

I thanked Premier Stefanson for her hospitality and engagement and was pleased with the commitment to dialogue from Premiers Eby, Ford, and Moe, as well as Quebec Premier Legault.

I will continue to share our history with the leadership of other levels of government to recognize our rights within our Homeland, particularly as it relates to harvesting. They must understand that we were promised 1.4 million acres of land reserved for the children of Red River Métis families. They need to know that this was further followed with the corrupt Métis scrip system, and the Reign of Terror that forced our people to flee from the Red River Settlement further West in search of peace and stability - which is why our people live across the Homeland and beyond, even today.

Exiled, Red River Métis went on to create new homesteads in areas that later became known as Richer, Ste. Genevieve, St. Ambroise, Ste. Amelie, and Ste. Madeleine, but our people also settled in places like Île-à-la-Crosse and St. Paul Des Métis, just to mention a few. We were farmers, raising cattle, ranching, hunting, or trapping. We built towns, raised families, and found joy in being together, looking after each other, and being independent.

One place where you could see our way of life continuing was the historic town of Ste. Madeleine. As Citizens know, we return to the site of this once thriving Red River Métis village, built during the era of our exile. We gather here every year thanks to the incredible efforts of the Ste. Madeleine Local and the Southwest Region. Their hard work organizing the festivities ensures we have the opportunity to gather and share the memories kept alive in this place. Sharing this time together as a family and celebrating our Red River Métis culture is always wonderful.

However, we must always remember what happened in Ste. Madeleine and commemorate the lives of those who survived the tragedy that took place there during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

During this challenging time of drought and financial uncertainty, the federal government passed the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act*.

Ste. Madeleine was selected as an area that would be reclaimed for cattle pasture. While Red River Métis families were away from the town and working for local farmers in the summer of 1938, Ste. Madeleine was burned to the ground. Everything, from the church and Beliveau school, to homes where families with many children lived, was reduced to ash. Dogs were shot and belongings were destroyed. This all happened while the country again asked us to go and fight for people we did not know overseas in World War II. While we were gone, they did this to our families and our homes. It is shameful that we gave our hearts to Canada, but our lives were rejected.

Today, this tragedy remains within living memory. The tragedy of Ste. Madeleine was not a 19th-century random act of aggression but the result of 20th-century government policy. This is one of the many reasons I will always defend the rights of Red River Métis Citizens and insist that our place in Confederation is recognized and respected.

We believe our negotiations with the province of Manitoba will continue to progress quickly and we will have a chance to right the historic wrong of Ste. Madeleine, through the return of the land to our people. Once that happens, we can build a memorial at Ste. Madeleine to remember all the families, so all Red River Métis remember our history, and Canada never forgets what was done to us.

I will always sit at the table and be fully engaged with the leaders we now call our partners across our Homeland for a renewed government-to-government relationship. As Ste. Madeleine and so many other events have demonstrated, our people have suffered too much to waste the opportunity of these meetings for anything else.

Until we can be together again, I offer my prayers to all our Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

Meeqwetch,



President David Chartrand. LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞

EDUCATOR NETS AWARD FOR CREATIVE ECONOMIC LESSONS

While teaching at Murdoch MacKay Collegiate, Red River Métis teacher Kim Dudek never thought inspiring her students to create a trading post would land her a national award for her ingenuity in teaching economics.

The educator was bestowed the Bank of Canada Museum's Award for Excellence in Teaching Economics. According to its website, the honour recognizes outstanding economics educators and aims to "inspire teachers to bring economic concepts into the classroom in new and creative ways."

Dudek, who has been teaching for nearly 30 years, said she can't take full credit for coming up with the idea. It started in 2021 when many of her Indigenous Academic Achievement program students struggled to come up with cash and afford gifts for Christmas because of the global pandemic.

"In my head, I was initially like, we'll make something for their families. Then, we started talking more, and one of the kids said, 'why don't we do a trading post like back in the day?'" she said. "And, I'm like, 'why don't we do a trading post like back in the day?' So, this is kid-generated."

The Red River Métis teacher and her class began planning and organizing the event, which gave her a rare opportunity to touch on a subject not taught in schools.

"This gave me a great point of entry for my students to start to understand how they fit in this capitalist economic society and how their gifts can benefit themselves and others," she said.

As the sale crept closer and many students created and brought their works to sell, it allowed her to host organic conversations about economics and pricing. Dudek said she and her students looked at a few pieces that would be in the sale and price items out, like beads.

"There was some conversation about how much are (customers) going to pay, and you must factor in a bunch of stuff. We walked through what minimum wage means and why it's a minimum. So, you could have deeper conversations with students."



Red River Métis Citizen Kim Dudek was awarded the Bank of Canada Museum's Award for Excellence in Teaching Economics.

Dudek takes great pride in the fact that all these conversations came up naturally.

"Which I think is among the best ways to learn things, because they directed me into what they wanted to know," she said.

The event has gone on for the last two years, with students spending a lot of time and effort creating their goods to sell.

"We had a couple of incredible beadworkers. They did earrings, embellished medicine bags, pouches, and moccasins. We had plants. There was one kid who liked gardening," she said. "We had bannock makers, the fry bread was out, and a kid made soap, which I thought was interesting."

Dudek expressed her gratitude for her co-worker Dana Jansen, who she said has been a wonderful support in setting up the trading post and creating an exceptional ambiance. While at the market, students had the chance to show off their musical talents and make some extra money through busking.

Many classes at the vocational school contributed their efforts to make the trading post a success. The school's fashion program helped design Christmas stockings and other items for the trading post, and the metals class designed a wolf for a silent auction raffle prize.

Each year, the trading post has been a roaring success. Dudek's students wanted to help give back to the community and donated \$1,000 to the North Point Douglas Women's Centre.

Dudek was proud to see everything come together and watch what started as a conversation in class become a highly anticipated event.

"It became such a community piece for Murdoch MacKay. I think every group, everybody was represented somehow," she said. "Our Indigenous kids were leading it, and it was amazing."

The educator received a plaque and a gift basket of teaching resources, which she said was an honour.

"You don't go into this job to get financially rich. Don't get me wrong, I am grateful for the paycheques," she said. "But the rich reward is the kids. When they go on (to graduate) and reach back out to me and say, 'Miss Dudek, I'm (doing) this now,' or 'I'm an actuary.' I'm like, 'what, look at you go!'"

Dudek always knew she was Métis, but grew up in the lost generation and has been working hard to reclaim her cultural identity.

"I've got my own son now. We're teaching him. He and I took a Michif course. We're trying to reclaim lots of our lost pieces," she said. "It's great to watch him grow, know, and be proud of who he is."

The trading post will continue at Murdoch MacKay Collegiate but not under Dudek's watch. The teacher has accepted a role as vice-principal at John Pritchard School.

"I'm absolutely joyful to take on this role," she said. "I'm also very cognizant of the responsibility that they have entrusted in me, and I really want to do a good job."

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RED RIVER MÉTIS YOUTH GRADUATES FROM QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY



Recent Queen's University graduate Darrian Prendergast has completed her Bachelor of Science (Honours) with Distinction in Chemistry.

Darrian Prendergast is lighting the way as a true inspiration for Red River Métis women pursuing an academic career in science. The graduate recently obtained her Bachelor of Science (Honours) with Distinction in Chemistry (BSc) from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. While completing her BSc, Prendergast also participated in the accelerated master's program, successfully completing her first year in chemistry.

Being brought up in a military household, the Red River Métis Youth had the privilege of living in a variety of different places throughout her childhood.

"I spent four years total living in England across two separate postings and I spent a year abroad attending school in Switzerland for my senior year of high school," she said. "I returned to Canada for university in 2019."

Prendergast's high school biology teacher was a source of inspiration for her, motivating her to pursue science in her post-secondary education.

"Mrs. Morris was passionate in her teaching and made science so much fun to learn. Despite realizing that biology was not the stream of science for me, Mrs. Morris really made me love science and want to pursue it in some form," she said.

From that moment on, the Youth could feel herself gravitating toward the fascinating world of science.

"When I originally chose my major, I was very hesitant, knowing that it would not be an easy ride. I went into my major only *liking* chemistry, but I graduated this year truly *loving* chemistry and I believe this is largely due to the community in the (chemistry) department at Queen's," said Prendergast.

The graduate never imagined that her academic journey would go by as quickly as it has.

"Graduating this year felt very bittersweet. It was sad to feel like this chapter of my life was coming to an end, it truly felt like it went by way too fast," she said. "I, however, am returning this year as a member of the school of graduate studies, and I am extremely excited for this new experience."

Throughout her undergrad, Prendergast consistently achieved honour roll status and secured funding because of her outstanding academic performance. Her academic standing was acknowledged by Indspire, an Indigenous charity that aims to invest in the long-term success of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people, from which she received two bursaries in recognition of her impressive GPA. In addition to these successes, the graduate has accomplished many achievements throughout her four years of university.

"I was fortunate to be nominated by my supervisor for the Walter MacFarlane Smith Prize for outstanding achievement in a research project," she said. "Last summer, I was also given the opportunity to present my summer research as an undergraduate student at the International Conference on Analytical Sciences and Spectroscopy."

When deciding on the university that would perfectly meet both her academic and personal needs, Prendergast was confident in where she wanted to go.

"When I was in high school, I was told by many teachers that Queen's was an ideal choice for me. Not only because of my drive for academic excellence but also because of my desire for a fun and enjoyable university experience," she said.

While attending university, Prendergast always made sure to seize every opportunity, which led to an exceptionally positive experience.

"The courses I took at Queen's were incredibly interesting and the instructors who taught them had a love for their respective subjects that they really poured into their teaching," she said. "I loved being on campus, studying, and meeting friends. I took part in a variety of intramural sports including soccer, ultimate frisbee, volleyball, dodgeball, and many more."

Embracing her Red River Métis heritage has played a significant role in Prendergast's academic achievements.

"Métis people are very hard workers and I think that my work ethic, persistence, and determination are characteristics of my (Red River) Métis heritage," she said.

The student credits her aunt Jackie for preserving their family's Red River Métis heritage.

"I would like to thank my auntie Jackie for always giving us background on our family history and ensuring that we never forget our roots. My Métis Pépère passed away before he had the opportunity to do so himself, so thank you auntie Jackie for all you do," said Prendergast.

The Red River Métis graduate aims to make the most of the educational opportunities offered by the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) during her post-grad.

"Seeing the different bursaries and financial aid opportunities that MMF offers, it is something I will look into for my graduate studies," she said.

Prendergast hopes to inspire fellow Red River Métis Youth to pursue an academic career in science.

"Science presents a world of opportunities for anyone who chooses to pursue it. It is a field that sees real advancements when people with profound interest contribute to it, whether that be by learning, teaching, or working in the field," she said. "Chemistry itself does come with its own challenges; however, the work you can do with a chemistry degree is extremely rewarding. It is a degree that I would recommend to someone who is interested."

COMMUNITY PHOTO

From July 14-16, Red River Métis of all ages came together at Ste. Madeleine Métis Days to commemorate the once community of Ste. Madeleine by celebrating our rich culture with food, music, dancing, and more.



Le Métis' Community Photo section invites Red River Métis Citizens to send in photos to be featured in our newsletter. If you have a photo that celebrates the Red River Métis, send it to communications@mmf.mb.ca and you may see it in print!



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to tune in!



RED RIVER MÉTIS PLAYLIST SUMMER '23

∞
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DOC & MARCELLA VEZINA
HOLLY VEE
JESSE BANDURA
KRIS PAUL
MARTIN DESJARLAIS
MJ DANDENEAU
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PATTI KUSTUOK
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VICTORIA TURKO



Visit the MMF YouTube channel to listen to our Red River Métis Summer Playlist